

The Old Commonwealth.

G. SHEERY,
Publisher and Proprietor.

"IMPRIMATUR"

VOL. I.

HARRISBURG, VALLEY OF VIRGINIA, WEDNESDAY, APRIL 4, 1866.

NO. 26.

POETRY.

CORA LEE.

BY PEARL.

"Sweet Cora Lee,
Come down from the
Out in the soft, warm beam!
The stars' pure light,
Shine o'er us bright,
And earth with beauty teems."

"Then, Cora Lee,
Come down from the
Down by the lake's side;
I'll talk to thee,
Fair Cora Lee,
Of lands far o'er the tide."

"Dear Cora Lee,
With think of me
When I am far away?
Will think of one
But wanders lone,
And for his safety pray!"

"Will promise me,
Sweet Cora Lee,
Here, by this bright lake's side,
When I come home,
No more to roam,
Thou'lt be my cherished bride?"

"Thou'lt promise me,
Fair Cora Lee,
This little hand of thine—
So soft and white,
In the moon's pale light—
So fondly clasped in mine."

"And hast given me,
My Cora Lee,
That heart so kind and true;
As fond as mine,
Thine heart of mine,
Will ever thro' for you."

"Farwell to thee,
My Cora Lee,
When two short years are flown
I'll come again,
Across the main,
To claim thee as mine own."

"Far, far, away,
Day after day,
I'll dream of land and sea;
My heart was true,
Nor would be glad,
Without sweet Cora Lee."

"The months sped on
Two years had flown
I hastened home—
But death's cold hand
Had broke our bond—
Had claimed my Cora Lee!"

"No more I see
Sweet Cora Lee,
As in happy days of yore;
She waits to greet
My weary feet
On Heaven's bright golden shore!"

THE IMPROMPTU MARRIAGE.

"For Heaven's sake, Susy, do be serious,
if you can, for five minutes. Pray,
pray cease this trifling, which is but
amusing myself with my feelings; let us
treat this subject, as it deserves, soberly
and seriously."

"Well, there, then," cried the laugh-
ing, black-eyed girl, to whom Charles
Westley spoke. "There, then, is that
grave enough? See, the corners of my
mouth are duly turned down, and my
eyes rolled up, and I am sober as a
patient who has caught sight of the den-
tist's instruments. Do I suit you?"

"You suit me anyhow, and you know
it well, you witch!" cried Charles, gaz-
ing with a smile, at the pretty face, puck-
ered in its affectation of demureness.
But he was not to be driven from his
point, and he resumed gravely, after a
pause. "The time has come Susy, when
I feel I have a right to demand an ex-
plicit answer to my suit. You have
ridled with my earnest feelings long
enough. I have grown restless under
my fetters."

"Shake them off, then, Charles," inter-
rupted the saucy girl, with a pretty de-
fiant toss of the head, which plainly
said, "I defy you to do it!"

"I cannot, Susy, I cannot—and you
know it," replied the hapless lover, im-
patiently.

"That being the case," said Susy, "take
my advice—wear them gracefully, and
don't pull and jerk so—it only makes
them hurt you."

The young man turned away angrily,
and walked silently up and down the
room, evidently fretting and fuming in-
ternally. Susy, meantime, looked out
of the window and yawned. Charles
continued his moody walk.

"Oh what a beautiful bird on that lilac
tree!" cried Susy, suddenly. "Do come
and see it."

Charles mechanically approached the
window and looked out.

"Don't you think, Charles," said Susy,
laying her hand on his arm, and looking
up eagerly, "don't you think you could
manage to—"

"What, Susy, dear?" asked Charles, all
his tenderness awakened by her manner.

"What?"

"Drop a pinch of salt on his tail," re-
turned the provoking girl, what an affec-
tion of simplicity; "for then, you know
you could catch it!"

His answer was to fling her off, and
with a suppressed exclamation, turned
angrily away.

His walk this time was longer than
before, and his cogitations were more
earnest; for he did not heed any of Susy's
artfully artless devices to allure his
notice. At last he stopped abruptly
before her, and said, "Susy, for three
long years I have been your suitor, with-
out either confession of love or promise
of marriage on your part. Often as I
have demanded to know your sentiments
towards me, you have always evasively
refused me an answer. This state of
things must cease. I love you, as you
know, better than my life; but I will no
longer be your plaything. To-morrow
you are going away to a distance, to be
absent for months, and if you cannot,
this very day, throw aside your coquetry
and give me an honest, 'yes,' for my an-
swer, I shall consider that I have received
a 'no,' and act accordingly."

"And how would that be? What
would you do?" asked Miss Susy, curi-
ously.

"Begin by tearing your false and
worthless image from my heart!" cried
Charles furiously.

"It would be a curious piece of busi-

ness, Charles; and you would not suc-
ceed either," said Susy.

"I should, and would succeed," said
Charles, "as you shall see, if you wish,
crucel, heartless girl!"

"But I don't wish, Charles, dear—I
love dearly to have you love me," said
Susy.

"Why, then," cried the foolish youth,
quite won over again, "Why, then, de-
arest Susy, will you not consent?"

"Remember, I said I liked to be loved,"
replied Susy; "I did not say any-
thing about loving. But pray how
long did you say you had been courting
me, in that pretty little speech of
yours?"

"Three long years, replied Charles.

"Neatly and accurately quoted, Char-
ley. But you know my cousin Rachel
was only won after five years' courtship.
You don't suppose I am going to rate
myself any cheaper than she did, do
you? Suppose we drop this subject for
two years; perhaps by that time I may
be able to work myself up to the falling-
in-love point—there is no knowing what
wonders time may effect."

"If you are not in love now, you never
will be," returned Charles, sturdily;
"and I will have my answer now or never."

"Never, then," laughed Susy. But
she had gone a step too far. Her often,
severely-tied lover was now too much
in earnest to bear her trifling any longer.

"Never, be it, then!" he cried; and
seizing his hat, he strode angrily from
the room.

Susy listened to his receding footsteps
with dismay. Had she indeed, by her
incoherent love of coquetry alienated that
noble many heart? It smote her to the
soul to think so. As she heard him
open the front door, impelled by a feel-
ing of despair, she raised the window-
sash, and leaning forward whispered:

"Charles, Charles! you will be at
the boat to-morrow to bid me good-bye,
won't you? Surely we are still friends!"

As she spoke, she tore a rose from her
bosom, and threw it to him. It lodged
on his arm, but he brushed it away as
though it had been poison and passed on
without looking up.

Susy spent the rest of that day in
tears. Early the next morning the bus-
tle of departure began. Susy was going
to accompany her widowed and invalid
mother on a trip for her health.

As they reached the wharf and de-
scended from the carriage, Susy's eyes
met themselves busy searching for one
wished-for face; but it was nowhere to
be seen.

The steambot lay panting and puff-
ing, impatient to be let loose, Susy's
mother, aided by the servant man who
accompanied them, had already crossed
the gang-way which lay between the
wharf and the boat, and Susy was re-
luctantly following, when the sound of a
voice behind her—the very voice she
was longing to hear—startled her. She
turned to look round, and missing her
footing, fell into the water.

Another instant, and Charles had
thrown off his coat, and calling out loud-
ly, "Tell the captain not to allow the
wheel to stir, and to lower me a rope!"
he sprang into the river. But of her
whom he was risking his life to save, he
was unable to perceive any trace.

Judging that the current of the river
might have carried her a little forward,
he swam around the wheel, but still he
saw her not, and despair seized his heart
as he conjectured that she might be un-
der the boat. He strained his eyes to see
through the water, and at length discerned,
far below the surface, what seemed
the end of a floating garment lodged be-
tween the wheel and the rounded bottom
of the boat.

If this were indeed the unfortunate
girl, the least movement of the wheel
must inevitably crush her, and Charles,
in his terror, fancied it was already be-
ginning to turn. He dived and clutch-
ed at the garment, but missed it. He
rose panting, and almost exhausted; but
scarcely waiting to get breath, he again
plunged below. This time his efforts
were rewarded with success, at least so
far that he was able to bring Susy's form
to the surface of the water; but she
seemed totally lifeless.

Charles was now so nearly exhausted
that he had only sufficient presence of
mind left to clasp Susy convulsively to
him while he kept himself afloat by
holding to the wheel.

But this, his last hope of support
seemed also to fail him soon, as he per-
ceived that it was now really beginning
to turn slowly around. By a desperate
effort he struck his foot against one of
the paddles so as to push himself as far
from the danger as possible. As he did
so something touched his head, and his
hand grasped a rope. New life seemed
now infused into him. He gathered all
his energies, and fastened the rope
round Susy's waist—consciousness then
entirely forsook him. In the meantime
the witnesses of the scene, after giving
Charles' instructions to the Captain, had
watched his struggles and exertions with
breathless interest. The friendly rope
had been flung to him again and again,
but in the excitement of his feelings,
and his semi-insensibility, he had been
incapable of availing himself of the offer-
ed aid.

At last, perceiving that he was quite
exhausted, and must inevitably soon let
go his hold on the wheel, and then prob-
ably sink to rise no more, the captain
judged it best to run the risk of moving
off, so that a small boat could be sent
to the rescue.

The result of this hazardous experi-
ment was successful. Susy was raised
by means of the rope, and a boat reached
Charles in time to save him also.

Both sufferers were taken on board the
steambot, which now rapidly moved off
to make up for lost time.

And thus, when our hero regained his
consciousness, he found himself many
miles from home. Of course his first

anxious inquiry was for Susy, and when
informed that she was rapidly recover-
ing, his happiness seemed complete. He
showed his contentment by turning over,
and falling into a deep, quiet sleep.

About sunset a message came to him
that Miss B— desired to him.

He found her lying on a sofa in the
captain's state-room, which had been
given up to her. She looked very pale,
and somewhat suffering, but she held
out her hand to him very gratefully,
while the tears stood in her eyes.

"Charles," she said, without offering a
word of thanks, "I want to see a clergy-
man. Is there one on board?"

"I will go and see," said Charles; mov-
ing to the door; but a dreadful thought
struck him, he turned, exclaiming,
"Susy, you do not think—"

"That I am going to die?" said she,
anticipating him. "No Charles; but I
want to see a clergyman."

Charles went and soon returned, ac-
companied by a minister.

"I thank you, sir, for coming to me,"
said Susy to the latter, as he entered.—
"I have a strange request to make to you.
Would you object, sir, in the presence,
to unite me to that gentleman?"

If the minister was astonished at this
request, Charles was infinitely more so.

"What did you say, Susy?" said he. "Did
I hear right?"

"I believe so," said Susy, smiling at his
eager amazement. "Does the scheme
meet your approval?"

"It was heaven-inspired!" cried the
poor fellow, frantic with joy—but a shade
coming over his radiant face, he added
gravely, "But Susy, have you consid-
ered? Remember, I want your love, not
your gratitude. I will be satisfied with
nothing less."

"Do not be concerned about that, dear
Charles," replied Susy, gazing at him
very tenderly through her tears; "he
assured you have them both, and had
the first long, long before you had the
last."

"But Susy, you said only yesterday—"
interrupted Susy, with some of her old
spirit breaking out. "Just mind what I
say to-day. If I was a fool once, is that
any reason I must be one always? But,
indeed, Charles, she added more softly,
"I have always meant to be your wife—
the only simple I have is that I am not
half good enough for you."

It is needless to say how the discus-
sion ended. The reader has already di-
vised that Charles continued his journey
and thus, in the course of one eventful
day, he risked a life, saved a life, made
an impromptu marriage, and set out on
a most unexpected wedding trip.

RAPELINO OFFA BABY.—The Da-
buque (Iowa) Express says a woman
came to the Minnesota House in Du-
alith with a young child, and after stop-
ping a day or two, suddenly left without
the baby, and did not return. The
landlord happened to go over to Du-
buque, and mentioned the circumstance
to a couple of friends married but child-
less; one of them proposed to adopt the
little one as his own; the other im-
mediately made the same proposition,
when a dispute arose as to which of the
would-be parents should have the infant
waif. Finally an appeal was made to the
dice-box. Quite a number of people
gathered around the table, interested
spectators of the singular contest, and
the winner, named Kelson, was greeted
with a shout of applause. The child is
a pretty girl, three weeks old, and her
new found parents are brimming over
with happiness.

When you find a man doing more busi-
ness than you are, look at the adver-
tisements he has in the newspaper.—
The business man who puts his sign in
the newspapers does a much wiser thing
than when he fastens it over the store,
and who would think of neglecting that
the man who advertises informs the pub-
lic that he wants trade, and his card is
in the newspapers. No matter how well
a business man is known, he can always
get new customers if he will take the pains
to advertise; for by neglecting the means
of securing trade it loses the best of his
profits."

ANECDOTE OF QUIN.—Huin was at a
small dinner party. There was a deli-
cious pudding, which the master of the
house begged him to partake. A gentle-
man had just before helped himself to an
immense piece of it. "Pray," said Quin,
looking first at the gentleman's plate and
then at the dish, "which is the pudding?"

TALL DANCING.—The New Orleans
Star describes a ball given in that city
by the milliners and modistes, during
which the dress of one of the dancers
caught fire. The Star adds:

"Some idea of her style of dancing
may be gathered, when it is further stated
that the dress caught from one of the
chandeliers overhead."

A stingy man inquired of a workman
at his table if he knew how many cakes
he had eaten.

"The latter was unable to
say. 'Thirty-three,' roared the miser.
'Very well,' said the workman, 'you
count and I'll eat.'

A pretty girl was heard to say a few days
ago: "If our Maker thought it wrong
for Adam to lie single, when there was
not a woman upon earth, how criminally
guilty are the old bachelors, who with
the world full of pretty girls?

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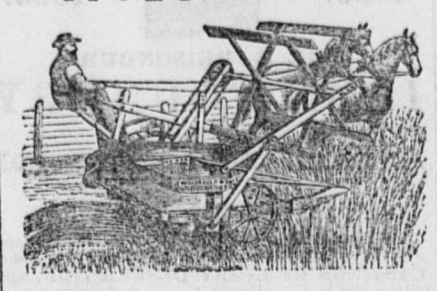
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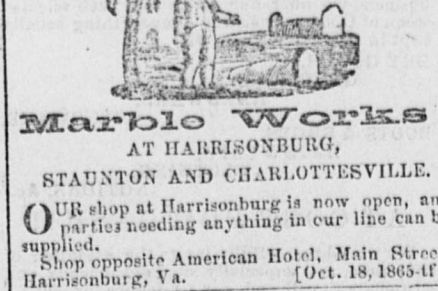
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